

Kentucky Board of Education Report
Commissioner Gene Wilhoit
For
September 17, 2006 Council on Postsecondary Education Meeting

August 2-3, 2006 Kentucky Board of Education Highlights:

➤ ***REVISIONS TO ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM DISCUSSED***

To prepare for future regulation amendments that will implement changes in Kentucky's accountability system, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff presented policy issues and possible options for the Board to consider at its August meeting. The new testing system that will be implemented in 2006-07 will require that the Board make adjustments to the accountability system due to changes in some of the components making up the testing system. Changes within the accountability system were characterized as potentially having an impact on the academic index (student performance in seven content areas), the nonacademic index (currently attendance, retention, dropout and transition to adult life) and/or the norm referenced test index (student performance in reading and mathematics on a norm referenced test).

Policy issues that were raised included:

- How should ACT and other readiness exams be included (academic index, nonacademic index and/or norm referenced test index)?
- Should KDE propose transitions to grow the system and implement change over a period of time?
- Should all content areas maintain a similar emphasis in the accountability calculation?
- Should the percentage of the accountability index derived from reading and mathematics at elementary and middle school increase due to annual testing in grades 3-8?
- Should ACT (begins in 2007-08) reading, mathematics and science items that align to Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment contribute to results in content areas?
- Should measures and data collection processes for the nonacademic factors be modified?
 - Should the Individual Learning Plan be used to capture nonacademic data?

- Should ACT and WorkKeys (both begin in 2007-08) postsecondary benchmarks be used as measures of transition to adult life?
- Should the weighting of the statutory, nonacademic factors be changed (attendance, retention, dropout rate, transition to adult life)?
- Should a norm-referenced test that provides national comparisons be included in the accountability calculation at every school level?
 - Should the grade 6 norm-referenced test (CTBS) in reading and mathematics be included in the elementary accountability?
 - Should the grade 8, 10 and 11 readiness assessments [EXPLORE, PLAN, ACT (begins in 2007-08)] be included in the appropriate middle and high school accountability?

No action was taken on these issues. The Board will meet on September 6 and devote the majority of this meeting to these important policy questions.

For more information on the accountability issues, contact Pam Rogers at (502) 564-2256 or via email at Pamela.Rogers@education.ky.gov.

➤ ***UPDATE FROM MEASURED PROGRESS ON THE WORK TO PRODUCE THE 2006-07 STATE ASSESSMENT***

Tim Crockett, Assistant Vice President of Measured Progress (Kentucky's new primary contractor for the state assessment), appeared before the Board in August to update members on the status of the work to produce the state assessment that will be administered in 2006-07. Highlights from Mr. Crockett's update included:

- The senior management of Measured Progress is made up primarily of former teachers.
- The company intends to earn the Board's and Department's trust as the primary assessment contractor.
- Measured Progress made the decision to seek the Kentucky contract because it believes in engaging states that focus on improving student learning.
- The company has grown dramatically over the last few years and has a good track record of delivering the work that is promised.
- Measured Progress has brought its A-team to the table for the Kentucky project with the two program managers who are heading the work having over 35 years of program management experience combined.

- A lease has been signed in Louisville for facilities that will serve as a Kentucky scoring center, distribution center and office space. The decision was also tentatively made to close its Colorado facility to bring more work to Kentucky.
- Over the coming months, Measured Progress will be identifying leadership/full-time employees within Kentucky that will come to New Hampshire for a residency to learn the company's system and processes.
- The Louisville site will initially employ 400-500 temporary employees in the scoring center and 150 temporary employees in the distribution center. Over time, the percent of employees who are part-time versus full-time will increase as more work from other states comes to Kentucky.
- An in-state program manager will be hired within the next two months to serve as a liaison between the Kentucky office and New Hampshire office.
- As far as status of work-to-date:
 - Measured Progress worked with WestEd and the Department in April to develop and field test assessment items needed to fill in gaps due to expansion of the Core Content.
 - A large-scale field test of writing prompts is scheduled for September in 5th and 8th grades.
 - The first operational administration under the contract will occur in November with 12th grade writing (both items that count and field test items).
 - In spring of 2007, the implementation of the full Kentucky Core Content Test will occur with virtually all work processed out of Louisville.

For more information on the work of Measured Progress, contact Pam Rogers at (502) 564-2256 or via email at Pamela.Rogers@education.ky.gov.

➤ ***DR. MARLENE HELM AND REP. FRANK RASCHE CO-WINNERS OF DR. SAMUEL ROBINSON AWARD***

The Dr. Samuel Robinson Award was presented to co-winners Dr. Marlene Helm and Representative Frank Rasche as part of the August Kentucky Board of Education meeting. The award is conferred annually upon an individual(s) or group(s) in Kentucky for outstanding leadership, commitment and service in promoting equity and opportunity to learn at high levels for all Kentucky students.

Dr. Marlene Helm just completed a term at Eastern Kentucky University as interim dean of education after serving a year as interim superintendent of Fayette County schools. She also served as a teacher and Director of Elementary Schools in Fayette County. From 1999 to 2003, she served as Secretary of the Education, Arts and Humanities

Cabinet. Dr. Helm has received numerous awards and honors on a statewide basis. She was nominated for the Robinson award by current Kentucky Board of Education member Rev. C.B. Akins, who said of her, “While giving of herself untiringly in the public venue, Dr. Helm has also maintained a strong family presence. Her volunteer hours in the community are too numerous to count.”

Representative Frank Rasche has been a member of the Kentucky House of Representatives since 1993 and represents the 3rd District, which consists of McCracken County. He is chair of the House Education Committee and co-chair of the Interim Joint Committee on Education. Frank also is a member of the Budget Review Subcommittee on Education, the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee and the House Judiciary Committee, among others.

Representative Rasche received two separate nominations, one from Rep. Jody Richards, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and one from Rep. Larry Clark, Speaker Pro Tem of the House. “As a legislator, and especially as a chairman, Frank Rasche brings a thoughtful, measured approach to his job, always with an eye on the long-term impact of whatever is proposed,” said Speaker Richards in his nomination letter. “I cannot think of a person more committed to seeing our students excel.”

Representative Clark noted in his nomination letter, “Frank Rasche has promoted change when change was indicated through careful study and has resisted actions that would dismantle progress already made. He has devoted many years, accomplishing many great things, to improve the educational opportunities for all students in Kentucky.”

Dr. Robinson, after whom the award was named, was present at the ceremony. It was the intent of his colleagues to call attention to others in Kentucky who share Robinson’s passion for equity and opportunity in education by creating and annually presenting this award.

For more information on this award and/or its winners, contact Mary Ann Miller at 502-564-3141 or via email at MaryAnn.Miller@education.ky.gov.

Next meeting: October 4-5, 2006 - KHSAA Offices, Lexington, KY